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June 3, 1977

AT

Assistant to the President  
for Domestic Affairs  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Re: Atlanta City Forum

Dear Stuart:

At your suggestion I am writing to follow up on our discussion at lunch last Friday of the public affairs breakfast series we are establishing here under the name of the Atlanta City Forum. The Forum will be modelled after the one conducted by the City Club of Cleveland, a venerable institution whose purposes and activities are well summarized in the enclosed pages from its yearbook.

As you well know, downtown Atlanta has its clubs and associations which gather periodically around common business and professional interests. There is no single place, however, where all of its people, both the acknowledged and the soon-to-be leaders, can go primarily to recharge their intellectual batteries with fresh information and ideas on the political, economic and social issues of our time.

The Atlanta City Club, located in the Equitable Building has agreed to lend its facilities for and sponsor a series of breakfasts dedicated to these purposes. Food service will be quick and simple, with the speaker coming on at 8:15 a.m. and time reserved for questions from the floor at his or her conclusion. All such sessions will be open to the public.

We have a commitment from one prominent local radio station of technical assistance in taping the proceedings for expected rebroadcast as public affairs programming on

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Re: Atlanta City Forum

a number of stations in and beyond the metropolitan area. The Cleveland experience leads us to believe that the programs will be widely used and that such guaranteed media exposure--combined with the quality of the audience--will enable us to continue to attract nationally prominent speakers without the payment of honoraria.

The crucial ingredient in this plan however is the guarantee of a truly big attraction for our first program. A committee of Atlanta City Club members and others, chaired by Bill Speer and including Richard Felker, current President of the Downtown Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, is ready to move immediately to recruit a blue-chip advisory board and to raise the funds which will be needed for expenses from Atlanta's major businesses and professional firms. The consensus of the group is that we need to be able to tell these backers that we have that first speaker lined up, and that CIA Director Admiral Turner would be the most exciting figure we could present, talking on a subject of universal interest, namely morality in international relations.

We would like to kick the series off between the 12th and the 30th of September, on any morning of the week except Monday, and preferably not Friday. If for any reason the Admiral could not make it in September but would be willing to give us a date in October or November, I am sure that we can proceed to build a series on that basis. The Forum would provide the costs of his transportation, meals, lodging, and the appropriate amenities.

Having been a member of this community, you can appreciate what these programs can add to the quality of life and potentially the quality of political dialogue in downtown Atlanta. Since Atlanta is the virtual hometown of this administration we expect the Forum to have no trouble at all attracting personalities from the opposition, who it will of course have an obligation to invite. We hope the Administration will see its way clear to help us by committing one of its major names to this project at the outset. Our next meeting will be at noon on Tuesday, June 28; may we possibly have a response by then?

AT

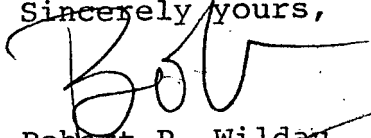
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Re: Atlanta City Forum

Needless to say it was an honor and a thrill to visit with you as we did last week. Karen joins me in sending our thanks and our best regards to Fran.

Sincerely yours,

  
Robert P. Wildau

RPW/cb

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